

Team Blaze Quarterly Newsletter

March 2010



TRIATHLON CLUB

Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of the Team Blaze Newsletter. The goal of this newsletter is to provide you a look and glimpse of another side of our triathlon club. Here we hope to present a different perspective on the club and the terrific people who make up the membership.

And off we go!

President's Message

Team Blaze members,

Welcome to Team Blaze Spokane Triathlon Club! We have many positive training and racing adventures ahead for 2010! As I mentioned at the party we want to encourage everyone to register for the forum and consistently check the forum/calendar for updates. I'll continue to provide coaching tips and

answer all member questions on the Coach Q & A section on the forum.

I encourage everyone to take an active role in the club by volunteering and participating in club workouts. Club workouts are opened to all ability levels providing ideal opportunities to connect with other members and receive coaching! By participating in club workouts/clinics such as mini triathlons and open water swims you will gain valuable experience as you prepare for your upcoming race season.

Healthy training,

Coach Scott

Workout of the Quarter

Ted Nugent once released a record album (for those younger folks this was a black round plastic thing that was played on a turntable) titled Intensities in Ten Cities (oftentimes the album cover alone was worth the price of the record). Team Blaze is spread out among a number of local burbs which is appropriate to Terrible Ted's line of thinking.

If you spent the winter months spinning along on your trainer while watching old Seinfeld reruns you will probably experience a rude awakening when you encounter your first outdoor bike ride.

Winter does provide us with the opportunity to scale back on our training hours and spend more time with family and friends, but we can still generate some terrific progress by ramping up the intensity a bit. And if

you have not yet done that, it is not too late. We are still a few months away from the upcoming racing season.

I highly suggest that you incorporate some higher intensity training in your bike regiment. A great place to start is to add 30/30s once a week.

Here is how you do it. After a 15 or 20 minute warm up begin the 30/30s. A 30/30 is all out for 30 seconds, followed by 30 seconds easier. It is important that you don't stop working completely during the easy 30 second portion. A good rule of thumb is to try to keep your easy portion effort at 50% to 60%.

A nice 30/30 main set would be 2 x (5 x 30/30) with a two minute rest between each set.

Then finish up with an 80% to 85% effort for the remainder of your ride. I would suggest that you strive to ride for a total of 1:00 to 1:15.

Team Blaze Training Meet Ups

Each week Team Blaze members meet for swimming, biking and/or running sessions. For a quick overview, take a look at the Team Blaze calendar which can be accessed from the Team Blaze home page. And if you are looking for company on a run, bike or swim, be sure to post your thoughts in the Forum.

Member Highlight

In each newsletter issue we hope to introduce a Team Blaze member. Here is our inaugural Member Highlight.

Our first Team Blaze member highlight brings you a true gentleman of the club; Mason McCuddin. Mason has a lifetime of adventures and experiences – both athletic and beyond.

Mason began biking in high school and with a bicycle as his main mode of transportation, he developed the fitness and interest to move into road bike racing. He enjoyed time trialing best in that his favorite competitor was himself. His favorite bike was a 20 year old Peugeot and he accessorized via wearing his helmet at a jaunty angle in honor of racing great Greg Lemond.

Somewhere along the way Mason caught a glimpse of Olympics speed skaters and decided that this was the sport for him. He immediately purchased a pair of in-line skates and headed out for his first effort. This was a very short experience as he made a left turn, and then another into his neighbor's driveway. His good friend and neighbor waved hello as Mason glided down the driveway in his direction and then looked on in wonder as Mason kept going and crashed into the back of the neighbor's garage. Mason's next lesson was to learn how to stop while on skates.

Later Mason joined a local in-line skating team. At his first team training event the coach laid out the one thousand yard warm up interval. Mason quickly found himself on the side of the track, bent over, barely able to stand and sucking wind like his life depended upon it, wondering how to get through the warm ups, let alone the main set. However, he kept at it

and as his fitness and speed developed he won some local races.

During his road cycling period, he was a serious rider and at one point Mason completed the Seattle to Portland bike ride nine years straight, and every ride was completed in a single day. He chose the single day version because Mason had difficulty envisioning himself crawling out of a tent on day two and jumping back on his bike.

Mason has always had an artistic spirit which perhaps can be attributed, at least in part, to his father, who was an artist in his own right. This interest in the arts led Mason to a 25 year love affair with the camera where he found he could create and capture to nurture that deep seated artistic side. After 25 years Mason began to look in a different direction for art.

While at a local exhibit Mason saw a man selling cutout metal deer and decided he could do as well, if not better. The main challenge was that Mason had no experience in working with metals. However he found a man who agreed to teach Mason how to cut and create using the metals and soon Mason was forming his own artistic pieces. At this point in this journey he now had some very nice metal figures, but had no stands on which to mount them. So Mason found another person who could teach him how to braise and weld. This is a hobby and outlet that Mason continues to excel at to this day.

And while life was continuing to get busier for Mason, he still had an unresolved itch involving music. He pulled out an old, unused guitar and began to delve into the blues, and

take up that medium. Mason continues to play and grow and live the blues through his guitar and has begun accumulating a library of blues music as he works to study and master this decades old musical formula that continues to entice and excite musicians everywhere.

During Mason's T'ai Chi period, he found that by focusing his mind solely on the movements he would reach a state of mental calm and clarity and thoroughly enjoyed it. However, he discovered that as much as the sport generated coordination, relaxation and centering of his spirit, he did find it wanting in the endurance department.

Mason's first experience in triathlon was while watching his sister, Colleen Cicarelli, compete in a local Plunge, Ride and Plod event. He was struck by her awesome smile as she exited the swim and headed for her bike. When she suggested that he could compete as well, he deferred but did agree to ride with her.

On a later ride together he was a bit stunned to find, as the previously stronger sibling, he struggled to keep up with the every increasingly fit Colleen. She continued to needle him into trying a tri and his concern was that he did not know how to swim. However, Mason decided to overcome this minor bump in the tri road and signed up for swimming lessons. When he arrived for his first lesson Mason discovered that he was the only student. However, after some trepidation and second thoughts after seeing himself in his swimsuit for the first time in a full length mirror just before exiting the locker room towards the pool, he diligently followed the world weary 17 year old providing the

swim instructions and was soon swimming up to 50 yards without stopping.

Mason's instructor soon realized that Mason was ready for the next level of swim instruction and pushed him onward. Colleen had been talking about a great couple named Scott and Tristin who were providing swim instruction at the downtown YMCA so Mason gave them a try. During his first swim under the watchful gaze of Scott, Mason thrashed himself down the length of the 25 yard pool. As he looked up expectantly and a bit out of breath, Scott gently informed him that they, together, had a bit of work to do.

Meanwhile Mason decided to give running a try. His first experience found him making it completely around his block. Later, as he pushed onward, his distances increased until one day Mason was awestruck that he had run an entire five miles! Triathlons of all distances including IM CDA 09 followed and Mason is still at it, and enjoying every moment.

At this point in the story it is time to turn things over to Mason.

What advice do you have to newcomers to the sport?

- Stick with it and leave your pride in the car. I suggest that one should suck it up and soak it up.

What is your most important piece of triathlon equipment?

- A positive attitude. Keep smiling no matter how bad you feel. A smile will keep you going.

What do you like best about triathlon?

- I enjoy the people. I have found some of the best, most open people in triathlon.

What do you like least about triathlon?

- I dislike the fact that triathlon publications seem so equipment oriented.

What is your favorite work out routine?

- I really enjoy long run Sundays. Longer runs allow me to explore my limits.

What are your race and/or fitness goals for 2010 and beyond?

- I hope to keep it fun. This is a sport where our main competitor is ourselves. I hope to race the 2010 Portland Marathon and IM CDA 2011 – although that depends on my work. I am entered in the upcoming Centennial Trail Ultra run and will do what I can on that day.

What gets you excited in life?

- Watching the sun come up. If I can see the sun rise, I know it will be a good day.

Tell us something that no one knows about you?

- While I taught photography for 20 years, I am a very shy person and an unlikely teacher. I thoroughly enjoy imparting knowledge to others.

In conclusion, with Mason McCuddin, we find a gentle, deep thinker. Mason is a true Renaissance man – fully

immersed in all aspects of life and living. His interests run deep and wide and we are blessed to call him friend and team member in Team Blaze.

Thank you Mason, for your time and timely words.

Forum Talk

If you have not been visiting the Team Blaze Forum, here are some of the great comments you have missed.

"That is the thing about those pacer guys - they do not stop for anything - not water - not gummy bears - nothing."

"Keep up with the 4:30 lizard no matter what."

- Norma Meyers' thoughts captured in her 2009 Portland Marathon race report.

"Rest days and quality family/friend time are key! Motivation to train and consistency are the keys to success!"

- Coach Scott's comments in response to a question on balancing the volume of training.

"Whatever you are, be a good one."
Abraham Lincoln

- Dean Bays' favorite quote posted in a forum discussion on favorite Ironman quotes.

"Arrrggg, the treadmill....."

- Mason McCuddin responding to a post on how to run in the snowy days of winter.

"Always put your contacts in before rubbing Biofreeze on whatever hurts that day. It doesn't seem to matter if you wash your hands first... (that's all I have to say about that)."

- Jennifer Fields in a post on life lessons she has learned.

Upcoming Events

1st Annual Triathlon Swap, will be held on April 17th at the West Central Community Center from 12pm to 4pm. Mark your calendars to come on out to sell some of your unused stuff or volunteer to help. Contact Tristin for more information.

We would love to include you!

Do you have a story to tell? We would enjoy including your words here on whatever subject that interests you. Favorite recipe? Family tidbit? Favorite training ride or run? Favorite piece of equipment? Have you read something that would be of interest to others?

Whatever it is we, and other Team Blaze club members would enjoy hearing about it.

Just send your thoughts our way and we will put them in the next Newsletter. And we can even word smith them if you like.

Be on the lookout for our next issue in June 2010!